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Aruba signs historic aviation agreement with Colombia



Last Thursday in Bogota, Colombia, Aruba succeeded in signing cooperation with the Department of Civil Aeronautics of Colombia with respect to the third and fourth aviation freedoms. This was something for which Aruba worked very diligently to achieve.

Last March Aruban Minister Otmar Oduber travelled to Colombia to meet with the Director of Civil Aeronautics of Colombia, Santiago Castro, to discuss the possibility of a bilateral agreement be-

tween Colombia and Aruba.

In the past Aruba did not have aircrafts to offer and for this reason the frequencies from Colombia to Aruba was utilized primarily by those from Colombia to Aruba. However, during this meeting they were able to open the market completely to airlines from Aruba.

Not only have they achieved a complete liberalization in this bilateral agreement between Aruba and Colombia, but they also agreed on direct flights from

different Colombian cities that are not necessarily tourist destinations as is the current situation.

The Aruban delegation consisted of Director of the Department of Civil Aviation, Josef (Adi) Maduro, Advisor to the Minister of Tourism, Simon Arends, representatives of Insel Air Aruba and Aruba Airlines. Tiara Air Aruba representatives were hindered due to other commitments.

Continued on page 2

Eurovision winner gets triumphant welcome in Denmark



COPENHAGEN -- AFP photo shows Denmark's Emmelie de Forest raising her prize next to her team after winning the final of the 2013 Eurovision Song Contest in Malmoe, Sweden.

Exuberant Copenhageners braved the chill yesterday to celebrate Eurovision Song Contest winner Emmelie de Forest in Denmark's iconic Tivoli Gardens amusement park.

The Danish press lavished praise on the 20-year-old

after she comfortably won the glitzy competition early yesterday in Sweden's third-largest city, Malmoe.

Scores of fans greeted the star on her return and watched her perform at Tivoli, one of Copenhagen's main tourist attractions, local media said, after Denmark became the fourth Nordic country to win the competition in eight years.

Denmark won this year's Eurovision Song Contest with the song "Only Teardrops."

Alhambra Casino honors loyal employees of year 2012

For many years, the incentive program "Employees Luncheon Award" of Alhambra Casino, is honoring employees for their loyalty and hard work during 2012. For this year not less than 54 employees were honored for not losing one single day of work, which is remarkable as it represents almost 40% of the casino's workforce.



Continued on page 5

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Aruba signs historic aviation agreement...

Continued from page 1



This far reaching bilateral agreement covers both passengers and cargo, and greatly benefits our local airlines. The Minister indicated that this is a very important milestone for Aruba. This will create big opportunities

touristic ally for Aruba and for those wanting to do tourism with Colombia from Aruba. Henceforth, it will be possible to fly directly to Aruba from practically any part of Colombia.

By the end of the month a

delegation from Brazil is expected in Aruba to negotiate a bilateral agreement there as well, which will afford Aruba the possibility for using Aruba as a hub to other continents.

Team Aruba tops qualifying for second straight event



CORDOVA, Illinois: When Mother Nature ended the ADRL Georgia Drags after qualifying, Extreme Pro Stock number one qualifier, Trevor Eman and Team Aruba, were disappointed to not defend their position in eliminations. At this weekend's ADRL

Spring Drags they were given another chance, once again taking over the top spot in XPS.

In just the first qualifying shot, the Aruba.com / Alltel Wireless Mustang laid down an impressive 4.099. That number would be good enough

to keep them on top through all four rounds of qualifying. Heading into the event, Team Aruba was determined to defend the number one position that got cut short at the Georgia Drags. That determination paid off, and they will once again be on the pole for race day.

"We are thrilled with our performance," said Eman. "We have put in a tremendous amount of hard work to be a front running team and to finally be here feels really good."

The eight car XPS field is separated by only four hundredths of a second going into eliminations, making for some impressive matchups on race day. Eman will face off against Brian Gahm, who qualified with a 4.139.

Dick Miller returns to his dushi island Aruba



Dick Miller, host of The Dick Miller Radio Show in Aruba for 18 years, returns to Aruba on Wednesday, May 22nd. When the sun rises in Florida in the United States this Wednesday, Dick Miller will board an American Airlines flight back to his dushi island of Aruba.

Dick Miller, whose love for the island of Aruba and its people, found himself ending his famous, 18 year 7 nights a week radio show in 2005 when the economy effected his ability to continue. Sadly, Miller vacated his one hour time slot on Canal 90 FM and made the decision to retire from radio.

Deborah and Ambassador

Dick Miller will arrive Wednesday afternoon on American Airlines from Miami and will spend one glorious week here in Aruba, visiting their friends in the tourism industry, hoteliers and AHATA (the Aruba Hotel and Tourism Association), Government officials, businesses and restaurants. They will travel throughout Aruba with their bright smiles, beautiful memories and stories to try and catch up where they left off with hundreds of people.

Deborah and Dick hope to attend some special events to reunite with as many people as possible in the time they will be here.

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Antone and Janice Medeiros honored by ATA



Recently, the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a very nice couple as Ambassadors of Goodwill of Aruba. The symbolic honorary title is presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 20 or more consecutive years. The honorees were Mr. Antone and Janice Medeiros from Fairhaven MA USA. Antone and Janice are loyal guests of the Tamarijn, and they love Aruba for the nice climate, beautiful beaches, and they love to meet every year with their lovely Aruban friends. A certificate was presented to them by Mr. Ernest Giel, representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, together with staff members of the Tamarijn Beach resort.

Atlantic hurricane season: three US landfalls predicted

Pennsylvania -- AccuWeather.com reports after a devastating blow to the East from Superstorm Sandy in October of 2012, residents and homeowners on the Atlantic coast should anticipate another active season in 2013.

AccuWeather.com's long-range team predicts 16 named tropical storms, eight hurricanes and four major hurricanes for the 2013 Atlantic hurricane season. Of these, three are predicted to make landfall in the United States.

Atlantic Hurricane Season Key Points:

1. The season may begin quickly this year with development in the Caribbean in June.
2. AccuWeather.com is predicting strong storms this year with a strength of category 2 or higher.
3. Areas along the East coast to the Gulf of Mexico are at risk for impacts from a tropical system.

Warm water across the Atlantic and Caribbean, paired with less frequent wind shear, may result in an above-normal number of storms. The normal number of named tropical storms in a given year is 12, according to NOAA.

Additionally, 2013 could set the stage for stronger storms than were seen in 2012.

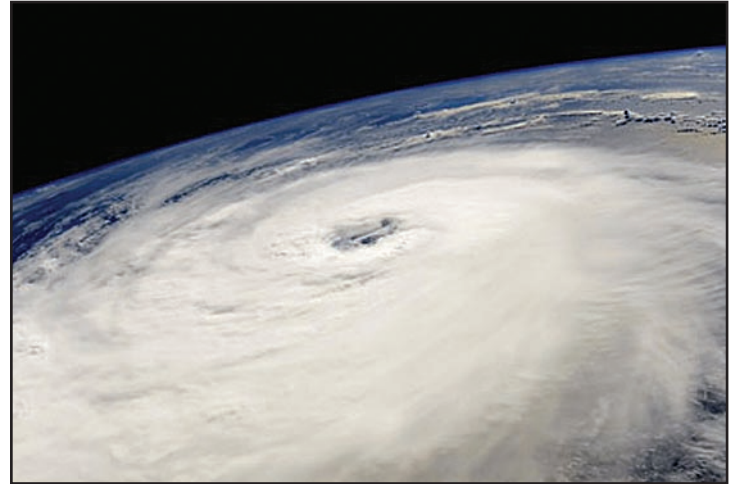
Episodes of Saharan dust, a factor that can stifle a storm's development, may be less frequent this season. The reduced amount of dust may allow storms with a strength of category 2 or higher to develop.

The season is predicted to be normal in development, compared to last year when two storms were named before the official start of Atlantic hurricane season, June 1.

Should storms brew early in the season, from late May to early June, the season total for storms may be even higher than originally forecast.

Last year's early storms were an "anomaly," AccuWeather.com Expert Senior Meteorologist Dan Kottlowski said. "We think that this year will be more in line with a typical active season."

The biggest concerns for



the upcoming season include development in the Gulf of Mexico, an impact in Florida and also another East Coast impact.

Florida is long overdue for a direct hurricane hit, Kottlowski said. Though they have been impacted by named tropical storms in the last couple of years, a direct hit by a hur-

ricane has not occurred since Hurricane Wilma in 2005.

Concern is high for the East because of the remaining devastation as a result of the October 2012 landfall of Superstorm Sandy.

Overall, however, the exact areas to be directly impacted this season and the severity of those impacts remain unclear.

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Arubianas Flip Flops awards student of youth art workshop



Recently, Arubianas Flip Flops awarded students of the art workshop Kinderateliers Aruba for their tremendous talent and enthusiasm for art. The creative sessions are conducted by island artist and teacher Miriam De L'isle, and the fantastic works were exhibited at the Aruba National Library in Oranjestad. The exposition's theme was "Shoco," dedicated to appreciation of Aruba's national bird, the tiny burrowing owl. The winners are 1st place: Laila de Graaf; 2nd place: Ayiana Paskal; and 3rd place: Maria Theresa (Tita) Barosso Croes.

Design team of Arubianas Flip Flops – comprised of Evelin, Damilice, George, Eva, and Carlos – had the difficult task of choosing two art pieces as models for Arubianas next production: flip flops for children. The art pieces and paintings will also form part of the

marketing campaign for Arubianas' Shoco designs.

Arubianas flip flop designs are all based on aspects of Aruba's culture and nature, with chic matching resort wear, such as caftans and elegant beach covers. The partners report they are proud to add the youthful creativity of the "Shoco" exhibit winners to their collection; "another beautiful item in our inventory aimed at promoting our island and culture." The students whose works were selected each received a gift certificate from Toys "4" Us.

"Shoco" is still on exhibit at the main branch of Aruba's National Library on George Madurostraat in Oranjestad. Visitors are invited to admire the fantastic winning art pieces, among the many other beautiful paintings, mosaics, ceramics and paper-mache works created by the students.



The artwork of the exhibit and many by the talented and respected artist Miriam D'Lisle are on sale during the two weeks of the exposition. All proceeds from any sales help fund the work of Kinderatelier Aruba, which is dedicated to developing youthful talent, and inspiring an appreciation for culture and the arts in island youth.

Local artist Vanessa Paulina illustrates two books

Vanessa Paulina has illustrated two books written by Hilli Arduin of Surinam. Children's author Hilli Arduin visited Aruba during the last Festival di Buki pa Mucha (Children's Book Festival).

During Arduin's visit she made contact with Vanessa. Title of the works are 'Ik Neem Je Mee' (I'm Taking you with Me) and "ABOIKONI." In the illustrations used by Vanessa Paulina, the characters Akesi, Aboikoni, Boni and Rogier and Selina are highlighted with pride and determination. Their message in the book is: Here I am and I will continue! Vanessa is also responsible for the layout and design of the two books. This week she submitted samples of each book to our library, 'Biblioteca Nacional Aruba.'

Vanessa is a visual artist in the disciplines of painting, illustration and fashion design. She studied fashion and illustration at the Willem de Kooning Art Academy in Rotterdam. She began her studies at Mode Academie Eindhoven and at Windroos Rotterdam, where she graduated as the top student. In support of her artistic efforts she studied Caribbean history at the University of Leiden, she also followed different courses, such as: Business at Atlas, Rotterdam, Tie Management, and 'In the picture,' at Kunstenaars en Co in Amsterdam.

Vanessa works as a freelance stylist and designer along with her painting. She has worked for different magazines in Holland like BLVD



and Dutch. She has also done fashion shows and video clips for different musical bands and for television commercials such as the series Westenwind and the well-known "Rayman is laat."

Vanessa has also worked for theater groups like 'Rotjong' designing costumes for "Alice and Peter Pan." Kibra Barera is still another group for whom she has worked in Rotterdam. Vanessa has organized painting and fashion design workshops in Aruba, Curacao, Holland, the USA and in Surinam. For more info on Vanessa Paulina, visit www.vanessapaulina.com.

Hilli Arduin, author of the two books illustrated by Vanessa Paulina, was born in Surinam, but grew up in Curacao. For the past 20 years she has been a successful story teller in the Caribbean islands, Holland and in other countries. In November of 2011 she published 'Prinses Ivana.'

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Alhambra Casino honors loyal employees of year 2012

Continued from page 1



The employees honored for their 5 years of service are Pedro Erasmus, Vinnety Coello, Antonia Figaroa, Rudolf Helder, Andre Holsman and Nathaniel Rasmijn. Only one employee marked 15 years of service, Nancy Kelly and one with 20 years of service is Emilio Growell.

The ones who marked 25 years of services are Lelia Croes, Raymond Kerpens and Wilbert Maduro.

For quite some time and still going on, Alhambra Casino has been under construction, face lifting and renovating, with all kind of inconveniences. Still, employees kept on going to maintain the excellent service towards customers that only Alhambra can offer.

Mrs. Annie Dirksz, Marketing and Advantage Players Club Manager and Mrs. Glenda Almary, Human Resources Manager, hosted this event and praised all its employees. President and COO of Treasure Bay Casino, Mrs. Susan Varnes thanked all the employees in her speech especially this remarkable list of employees for their service and hard work during all these years.

Also present were Mr. Jeff Prusinowski, VP Slot Operations and Mrs. Lee Ann Hunter, VP Finance of Treasure Bay Casino. A Special thanks to all members of the press and the entire staff of Hyatt Ballroom.

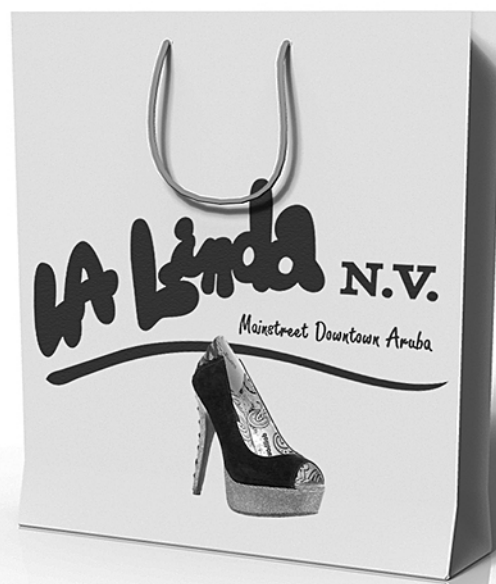




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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Syrian forces storm rebel bastion of Qusayr

DAMASCUS (AFP) - Syrian troops backed by Lebanon's Hezbollah yesterday entered Qusayr, a strategic rebel stronghold linking Damascus to the coast, a day after President Bashar al-Assad insisted he would not step aside.

The advance came as Assad's opponents warned his regime's "barbaric and destructive" assault on Qusayr could torpedo US-Russian attempts to organise a conference on ending more than two years of bloodshed.

The Arab League called an

emergency meeting for Thursday, ahead of the conference, as the opposition Syrian National Council (SNC) demanded that it meet and "stop the massacre in Qusayr".

Loyalist forces launched yesterday's Qusayr offensive with a heavy early morning bombardment using artillery and warplanes.

A military source told AFP that government forces were in control of the town centre and that the Syrian flag now flew over the recaptured municipality building.

Garment factory owner barred from leaving Bangladesh

DHAKA (AFP) - Bangladesh's top court yesterday ordered police to prevent the owner of a garment factory that catered to top Western retailers from leaving the country, six months after 111 of his employees died in a fire.

Delwar Hossain, the owner of Tazreen Fashion garment plant outside the capital Dhaka, was also ordered to appear before the court by May 30 after labour

activists sought his arrest for his role in the deaths.

The ruling comes as the country continues to mourn one of the world's worst industrial disasters in which 1,127 garment workers were killed after a nine-storey factory complex collapsed at the outskirts of Dhaka on April 24.

Although Hossain was accused of "gross negligence" in the November 24 fire by a government probe, he was never arrested, unlike the proprietor and owners of the nine-storey Rana Plaza.

Some activists say Hossain's close ties with the powerful textile lobby had protected him. But with emotions running high, it is unclear whether that will remain the case.

"The judges have ordered the law-enforcing agencies to bar (Hossain) from leaving the country and bring him to the High Court by May 30," deputy attorney general Biswojit Roy told AFP.

"The court observed that he should be arrested just like the owners of garment factories based at Rana Plaza," said Roy, adding the observation was not legally binding.

Fire accidents are common in Bangladesh's 4,500 garment factories as most plants use shoddy wiring and they lack fire-fighting equipment.

Fire at the Tazreen factory where the workers were making clothing for global retail giants such as Walmart was the country's worst industrial inferno.

Industrial disasters since November have killed at least 1,250 workers, highlighting the appalling safety problems in the plants where three million workers toil for a basic monthly wages of \$40, among the world's lowest.

Bangladesh is the world's second-biggest apparel maker and the \$20 billion industry accounts for up to 80 percent of impoverished country's annual exports.

UN Ban warns of N. Korea 'escalation'

MOSCOW (AFP) - UN chief Ban Ki-moon warned yesterday of a "dangerous escalation" after North Korea test-fired a short-range missile off its east coast, its fourth in two days, despite pleas to ease tensions.

"I hope that North Korea will refrain from such further actions," Ban told the RIA Novosti news agency in comments translated into Russian.

North Korea sometimes launches short-range missiles for tests or as part of military drills.

The United States and South Korean forces had been on heightened alert for a medium-range ballistic missile test in recent weeks amid tensions triggered by North Korea's nuclear test in February.

Ban said Pyongyang should resume negotiations adding that he hoped Russia would "use its contacts to lower the tensions and strengthen

Moscow was Pyongyang's most important ally in the Soviet era, although its influence over the nation has waned considerably in the past two decades as its financial assistance to North Korea shrinks.

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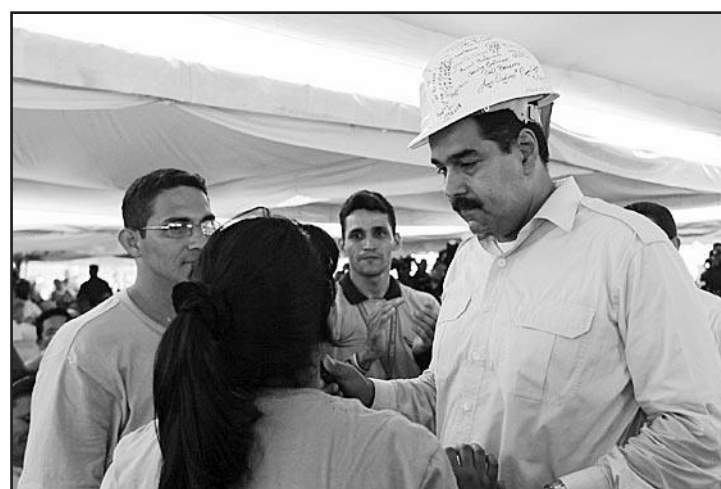
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CARACAS : Handout photo, released by the Venezuelan Presidency of Venezuelan President, shows Nicolas Maduro (R) talking with supporters during a ceremony in San Cristobal, Tachira state, Venezuela, in the border with Colombia on May 18, 2013. Maduro ordered the prohibition of the registration of homes and property by drug traffickers and paramilitaries. (AFP)

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International Scandals risk tainting Obama's second term



WASHINGTON (AFP) - With time ticking down to get things done in his final term, US President Barack Obama risks suffering long-term consequences from a series of scandals that have hit the White House in recent days.

After wavering initially, the US president has launched an all-out offensive to contain fallout from the trio of controversies.

Senior Obama advisor Dan Pfeiffer, doing the rounds of weekly television talk shows Sunday, went into damage control mode on the scandals, including one related to alleged abuses by the tax-collecting Internal Revenue Service, which targeted conservative groups.

"The activity was outrageous and inexcusable, and it was stopped and it needs to be

fixed so we ensure it never happens again," Pfeiffer said on ABC's "This Week" program.

In an appearance on CNN's "State of the Union," Pfeiffer addressed the administration's agenda going forward, in an apparent attempt to shift the spotlight to whether Republicans will help move ahead on vitally important issues such as economic growth and immigration reform.

"I think we're going to continue pushing forward with the president's agenda to help middle class families grow the economy," Pfeiffer said.

"I think all the events given last week the question is, are Republicans going to continue to work with the president?"

Republicans have been fiercely critical of the White House, saying the scandals are illustrative of an administration guilty of a massive abuse of power. Top Senate Republican Mitch McConnell continued the drumbeat on Sunday.

"There is a culture of intimidation throughout the administration. The IRS is just the most recent example," he said, speaking on NBC's "Meet the Press" show.

"We're talking about an attitude the government knows best, the nanny state is here to tell us what to do and if you start criticizing, you get targeted," McConnell added.

The scandals have dogged the administration for days, giving Obama what one Washington pundit called "the worst week in Washington."

Countering cover-up claims from Republicans in Congress about the deadly September 11, 2012, attack on the US mission in Benghazi, Libya, the White House on Wednesday released 100 pages of internal emails.

And amid a firestorm over the government's secret seizure of phone logs from reporters at

the Associated Press, the White House backed legislation to strengthen journalists' rights to protect sources.

Still, Obama appears to have weathered the storm relatively unscathed -- at least for now -- with a new poll out Sunday showing his ratings holding steady.

The CNN/ORC International survey showed Sunday that 53 percent of Americans say they approve how Obama is doing his job, compared to 45 percent who say they disapprove.

Experts still say though, that there could be serious fallout for the president, especially over the tax agency scandal, which led to the forced resignation last week of acting IRS chief Steven Miller.

"The most significant one that will be the long-term problem for the administration is the IRS scandal," said Kareem Crayton, associate professor of law at the University of North Carolina.

Miller told Congress on Friday that the tax agency had made "foolish mistakes," but had not been motivated by any political agenda.

Obama, by saying he had no prior knowledge about the special scrutiny of groups linked to the Tea Party movement and learned about it through the media, "unhelpfully solidifies an impression of the president and the administration that it's not paying attention," Crayton said.

Whatever happens next, "the enduring victim here ... is the sense that the president is doing the business of the people and is confident and up to the charge."

The controversies come at a delicate time for Obama, with the rapid approach of campaign season ahead of the 2014 mid-term elections giving him just a few months to push ahead with key agenda items like immigration reform and climate change.

Crayton said the scandals may have hampered this effort.

"There's an opportunity cost because all of this back and forth" over the controversies deflects attention from "any of the substantive issues that the Obama administration has talked about pushing in its second term."

Obama -- who on Sunday gave a rousing commencement speech at historically black Morehouse College in the southern city of Atlanta, Georgia -- took to the road last week to draw attention back to his domestic agenda, including early childhood education and investing in infrastructure.

On Friday in Baltimore, Maryland, he vowed not to get "distracted" by the mounting controversies.

"Others may get distracted by chasing every fleeting issue that passes by, but the middle class will always be my number one focus, period," the president said.

Aristide reappearance fuels comeback talk in Haiti



PORT-AU-PRINCE (AFP) - Having kept silent for nearly two years since returning from exile, recent public appearances by Jean-Bertrand Aristide have fueled speculation the former Haitian leader is eyeing a comeback. The 59-year-old former president readily stepped into the limelight last week when he was thrust into the public eye after testifying at a hearing into the murder of a journalist in 2000. Aristide followed the court appearance by heading to the center of Port-au-Prince accompanied by a several-thousand-strong crowd. The next day, Aristide told a press conference that his Lavalas party was well-positioned to "win a large slice of the electoral cake" at partial senatorial and local elections which will be held by the end of this year. His comments have not gone unnoticed.

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'Gap' for HIV vaccine efforts after latest setback



WASHINGTON (AFP) - The hunt for an HIV vaccine has gobbled up \$8 billion in the past decade, and the failure of the most recent efficacy trial has delivered yet another setback to 26 years of efforts.

With the next attempts expected to be years away, top researchers now say there is a "void" or a "gap" in current clinical trial efforts to test whether a vaccine may be safe and effective in people.

A kind of ongoing autopsy of the last four major bids to make an HIV vaccine has informed the field as to what does not work, with the latest casualty being a trial called HVTN 505 that was halted early because it did not prevent HIV.

Another concern for researchers is that two vaccine trials -- HVTN 505 and a previous trial known as STEP that ended unsuccessfully in 2007 -- both revealed apparent increases in the number of vaccinated patients who got HIV.

HVTN 505 showed 41 cases of HIV were acquired in the vaccine group, compared to 31 in the placebo group. Among some 2,500 participants, the difference was not statistically significant, and so researchers found that no harm was caused

by the trial.

"But the number is in the wrong direction," said trial leader Scott Hammer, who described the trial's outcome as a "disappointment."

Researchers are still investigating why this may have happened, but some theorize the cold virus known as Ad5 that served as a vector to deliver the vaccine may have somehow caused more infections by making it easier for HIV to penetrate the body.

The key puzzle in the vaccine search has been the nature of the human immunodeficiency virus itself, which has managed to fool modern medicine by changing its genetic makeup so often that a single weapon cannot silence it.

"The virus is a very elusive foe," said Wayne Koff, chief scientific officer at the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI).

"It is more variable than almost any other virus that a vaccine has been attempted for. So if one wants to make antibodies against a virus that is variable, one has to have a broadly reactive antibody," he told AFP.

A small number of HIV-positive people have been found to produce antibodies that can neutralize a broad range of

HIV variants, but scientists have not yet figured out how to make a vaccine from that information.

About 34 million people are infected with HIV worldwide, and AIDS has killed 30 million people since the epidemic began 30 years ago.

The vaccine field has fallen short of expectations since 1984, when Margaret Heckler, who was then US secretary of Health and Human Services, declared a vaccine would be ready for testing in about two years' time.

The first phase I trial of a vaccine began in 1987 at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland, and included 138 healthy volunteers. The first large-scale trials did not begin until the late 1990s.

The sole success story to date has been a trial in Thailand known as RV144, which in 2009 saw a modest, 31 percent rate of protection, still far below the 50 percent threshold needed in order to license a vaccine.

Researchers are continuing to study the results for clues as to why it worked in some cases but not others, and why it appears the protective effects may have waned over time.

A similar vaccine modeled for South Africans is expected to enter human trials in the next couple of years. Other approaches for increasing T-cell immunity are also on the horizon.



Gays, lesbians push for same-sex marriage in Venezuela



CARACAS (AFP) - Gays and lesbians demonstrated in Venezuela's capital Saturday to push for an end to discrimination and for civil rights such as same-sex marriage.

"In some areas of the capital, two men cannot be seen holding hands without security ushering them out," said Cesar Sequera, who leads Diverse Venezuela, among marchers waving signs like "Say yes to inclusion."

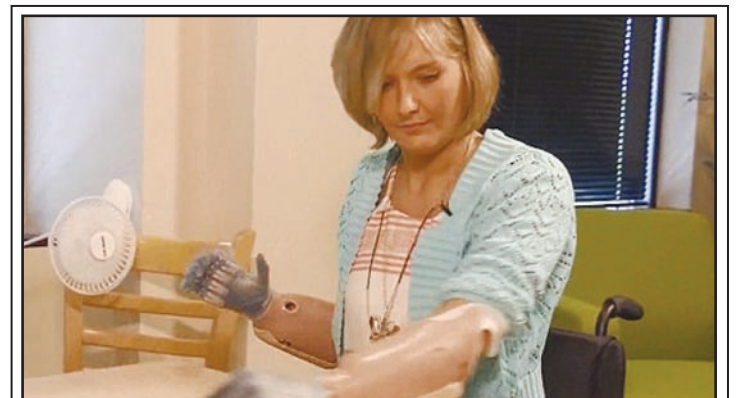
Sequera said the dozens taking part in the protest wanted to see the end of persecution of lesbians, gays and transsexuals in Venezuela -- and were seeking the legalization of same-sex marriage.

Bills seeking more rights for gays and lesbians have been "blocked by the religious fundamentalism which holds sway in the National Assembly," he said of the socialist government's main legislative force in the legislature.

But gay marriage has not come before lawmakers in the South American nation.

Uruguay's legislature voted last month to allow same-sex marriages nationwide, making it only the second Latin American country to do so.

Argentina approved gay marriage in 2010. Same-sex marriage has been permitted in Mexico City, but not the rest of the country, since 2009.



OHIO - Aimee Copeland, the 25-year-old who lost her hands, both feet and her entire right leg to flesh-eating bacteria a year ago, has received two new bionic hands. Copeland spent the week in Ohio at Touch Bionics, where she received two bionic hands free of charge. Copeland spent the week getting fitted for the limbs and learning how to use them. The prosthetics respond to muscle signals in Copeland's residual limbs and are capable of 24 different kinds of movements.

Sci-Tech

Yahoo! to buy blog-maker Tumblr for \$1.1 billion: report



NEW YORK (AFP) - The board of Yahoo! has agreed to a deal to purchase the popular blogging platform Tumblr for \$1.1 billion, the Wall Street Journal reported Sunday.

Yahoo! did not immediately return AFP's calls for confirmation, but CEO Marissa Mayer has scheduled a news conference in New York Monday at which the company said it will unveil "something special."

Reports last week said Yahoo! is eyeing the move to attract more users from the key 18- to 24-year-old age bracket, and that the Internet pioneer sees the fast-growing Tumblr as one of the "coolest" sites with young Internet users.

Yahoo! has been looking at a range of acquisitions since

Mayer took over as chief executive last year and vowed to revive the company, which has faded in the face of competition from Google.

Founded in 2007 and headquartered in New York, Tumblr says it has more than 107 million blogs, 50 billion postings in 12 languages and 175 employees. The website ranking site Alexa lists Tumblr as number 32 in terms of global popularity.

If the acquisition takes place, it would be the biggest for Yahoo! under Mayer and come in the wake of other pricey deals for startups, such as Facebook's acquisition of the photo app Instagram for stock worth \$1 billion at the time.

Internet in 'coma' as Iran election looms

TEHRAN (AFP) - Iran is tightening control of the Internet ahead of next month's presidential election, mindful of violent street protests that social networkers inspired last time around over claims of fraud, users and experts say.

The authorities deny such claims, but have not explained exactly why service has become slower.

Businesses, banks and even state organisations are not spared by the widespread disruption in the Internet, local media say.

Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and numerous other sites, including thousands of Western ones, have been censored in Iran since massive street demonstrations that followed the re-election of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in 2009.

Those protests -- stifled by a heavy-handed crackdown that led to numerous arrests and even deaths -- were instigated online and observers say the authorities are choking the Internet to prevent a recurrence.

One DVD vendor, who sells illegal copies of Western movies downloaded online, said "you can forget about downloading stuff; the bandwidth drops every other minute."

A network supervisor at a major Internet service provider in Tehran said his company had been unable to address complaints about slower speeds, particularly accessing pages using the HTTPS secure communications protocol.

The problem is not limited to slower speeds, but also affects what people can actually access in a country whose rulers take great care in seeking to ensure that people do not see or read things deemed to be inappropriate.

Earlier this month, an Iranian IT website reported that the last remaining software that enables users to bypass filters imposed on net traffic "has become practically inaccessible."

Authorities refuse to officially confirm the new restraints, but former officials and media reports have accused the Supreme Council of Cyberspace of ordering them.

The council, set up in March 2012, is tasked with guarding Iranians from "dangers" on the Internet while enabling "a maximum utilisation of its opportunities."



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LORIENT (AFP) - Crew members of the French Tara Oceans boat take care of the ultimate preparations on May 18, 2013, in Lorient, western France, on the eve of the boat's departure for a 25,000km tour of the Arctic ocean that will last seven months. French Tara Oceans boat navigates across all the world's major oceans to sample and investigate microorganisms in the largest ecosystem on the planet.

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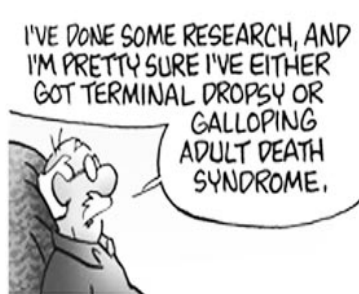


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COMICS



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ACROSS

1. Hand cleaner
5. Mideast land
9. IM provider
12. "The Egg ____" (2 wds.)
13. Spaghetti sauce brand
14. Basketball gp.
15. Pinocchio's lie detector?
16. Draft status (hyph.)
17. Exceedingly
18. Cable news inits.
20. Runs for it
22. Part of VCR
25. Divan
27. Adam's mate
28. Commandment word
30. Constricting snakes
34. Agt.
35. Intellect
37. Pothole's kin
38. Nile snakes
40. Fielder's glove
41. Dental gp.
42. Magnificent
44. Talk off-the-cuff (hyph.)
46. "____ and Juliet"
49. Fla.'s neighbor
50. Get by
51. Invitation inits.
54. Hopping creature
58. Reconstruction
59. Conversation

60. Writer Stanley Gardner
61. Sports addict
62. Female chickens
63. Hitters' stats

DOWN

1. ____ Fernando
2. Lennon's widow Yoko
3. Classified ____
4. Jigsaw puzzle part
5. Strong metal
6. Sprinted
7. Mature
8. Drink deeply
9. Contribute to the poker pot
10. Reed instrument
11. Southeast

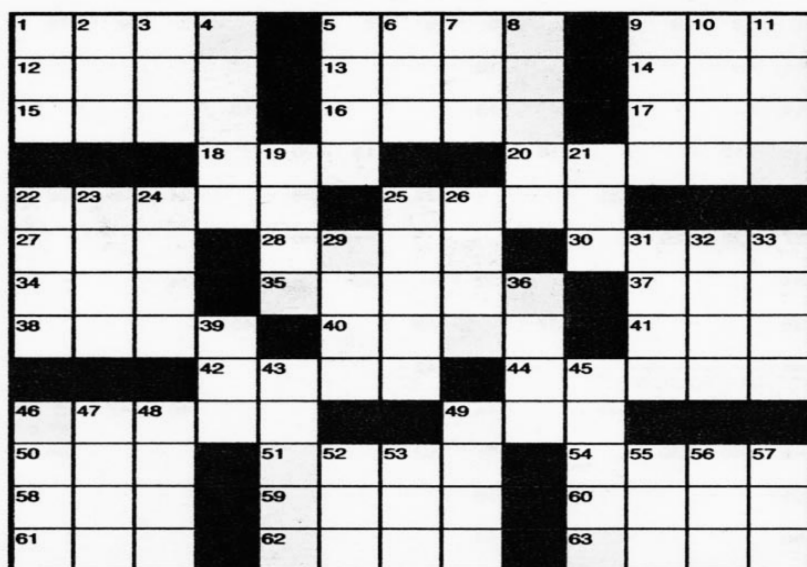
Asian nation

19. Have-____ (those without)
21. Science rm.
22. "Alice" waitress
23. "Big Daddy" Burl
24. Johnny of "Benny & Joon"
25. Part of SST
26. Remove from office
29. Half (prefix)
31. ____ hygiene
32. German car
33. Jerky thrust
36. And others (2 wds.)
39. Visualize
43. Veranda

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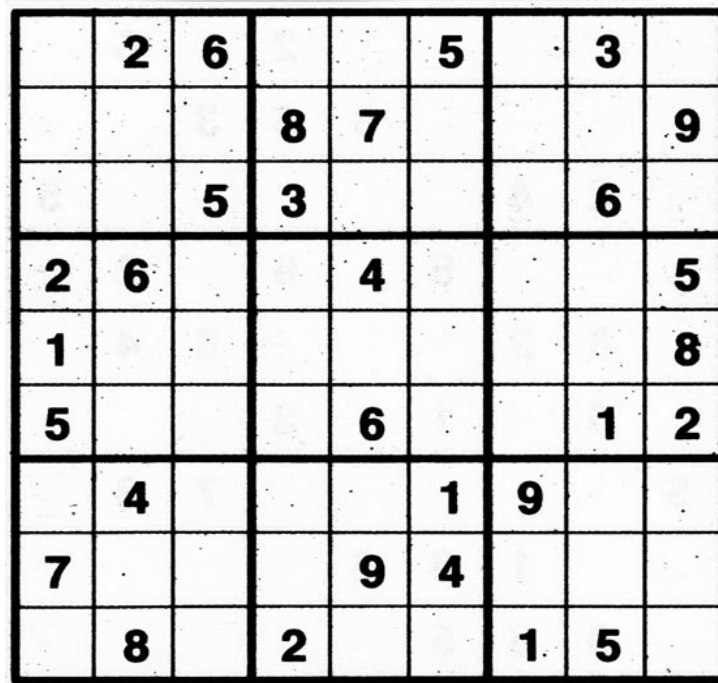
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Sudoku



SOLUTION

4	9	1	7	2	6	8	9	5
6	8	2	4	9	1	5	7	3
9	7	6	1	8	9	2	4	3
2	1	6	8	9	7	4	6	5
8	4	9	2	5	6	7	3	1
5	6	7	3	4	1	8	9	2
1	9	4	6	2	6	9	7	8
6	2	9	9	7	8	5	1	4
7	6	8	5	1	4	9	2	6

Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9
A number is Never repeated in a row or column.
In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9



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L	B	S	D	I	N	E	L	I	M
T	A	S	S	E	L	S	S	T	
I	D	S		S	C	A	N	T	
F	L	O	P		F	O	O	M	O
R	E	P		S	T	I	N	T	E
I	N	A		O	A	R		E	X
S	L	U	S	H		S	A	T	
	H	A	I		E	L	O	P	E
P	U	T	A		T	I	N	A	A
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FINANCE

Google boss defends British tax affairs

LONDON (AFP) - Google's executive chairman Eric Schmidt yesterday defended the US Internet giant's tax arrangements after claims it has unethically dodged paying vast amounts of British tax.

Writing in Britain's Observer newspaper, Schmidt insisted that Google "has always aspired to do the right thing" and that the company pays "significant" amounts of British corporate, local and employment tax.

But he added: "International tax law could almost certainly benefit from reform."

Margaret Hodge, chairwoman of the British parliament's influential Public Accounts Committee, last week described Google as "evil" as she grilled its vice-president Matt Brittin.

Google generates around £3.2 billion (\$4.9 billion, 3.8 billion euros) in Britain a year but paid only £6 million in British corporation tax in 2011.

The online search giant routes all of its European advertising sales through its offices in Ireland, where businesses enjoy relatively low tax.

"When a company only operates in one country, it's obvious where its profits are generated and thus where its taxes should be paid," Schmidt wrote.

"But for multinational companies with a global presence, it's much more complicated.

To pay the right amount in taxation, you need to determine where the profit is actually created."

But a former Google executive who gave evidence to Hodge's committee told the Sunday Times newspaper that the company was operating an "immoral" tax avoidance scheme.

"The real victims are ordinary taxpayers in Britain who are being cheated by Google," Barney Jones told the broadsheet.

Schmidt said corporate tax was "rightly a hot topic" at a time of economic hardship, but insisted that tax rules are set by politicians and it is up to them, not companies, to reform them.

"The UK government has the perfect opportunity to take the lead in shaping this complex debate at the G8 summit next month," he wrote.

Leaders of the world's eight biggest economies are due to meet in Northern Ireland on June 17-18.

Schmidt meets with Prime Minister David Cameron today at a gathering of the premier's business advisory group.

A Downing Street source said that tax would be up for discussion at the meeting.

"Tax will be discussed as part of a wider discussion on the economy and the G8 agenda," said the source. "Nothing is off the table."

Facebook outlook still muddled one year after IPO

WASHINGTON — A year after a nightmarish share offering, Facebook still has its ardent backers and detractors.

The world's biggest social network, which now has more than 1.1 billion users, has managed to boost its earnings since the initial public offering, including from its mobile platform, important in countering its critics.

Facebook has lifted its profits, and boosted the mobile segment to 30 percent of ad revenues in its most recent results, which generally beat Wall Street estimates. \$26.13.

S. Africa mining union demands 60 percent pay rise

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) - South Africa's mining union said yesterday it will demand pay increases of up to 60 percent for workers in the gold and coal mining sectors, mounting fears of a new wave of labour unrest amid rising costs in an already hard-hit industry.

The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) said yesterday it wants an employee working underground at a mine to earn a basic monthly salary of 8,000 rand (\$850, euros). Surface workers' expected pay was placed at 7,000 rand

(\$744, euros).

This translates as an increase of 60 percent for underground workers, up from the current salary of 5,000 rand a month.

South Africa's Chamber of Mines said it had received the demands and would start preparing for negotiations.

The hefty demands will mean a "serious and committed approach to negotiation", said the chamber's chief negotiator Elize Strydom.

Miners are battling poor commodity prices, with gold prices this month suffering their heaviest slump in 30 years owing to weak Chinese growth data and reports that Cyprus was planning to sell some of its reserves of the precious metal.

NUM's demands have revived prospects of widespread strikes after a rash of deadly labour unrest at the Marikana platinum mine last year spread to other mines, killing more than 50 people.

The platinum sector is already facing threats of renewed wildcat strikes after top global producer Anglo American Platinum announced early this month its intention to cut 6,000

jobs at the firm's South African operations.

Its cost-cutting plan had initially targeted 14,000 jobs before the company caved in to pressure from the government and unions to review its decision.

Amplats, which accounts for almost 40 percent of global platinum production, reported a drop in headline earnings of more than 140 percent in 2012.

At South Africa's Lonmin platinum mine, union rivalry saw workers stage a two-day strike last week.

Thousands of workers belonging to the upstart Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (AMCU) had downed tools, demanding that its rival NUM be ejected from the mine.

Analysts predict tough sectoral wage negotiation processes this year with the country going through hard economic times and unions emboldened by hefty wage increases granted last year to end strikes.

South Africa's hard-hit mining sector helped push growth downward from 3.5 percent in 2011 to 2.5 percent last year.

MOROCCO, Laayoune (El Aaiun): AFP picture taken on May 13, 2013 shows facilities of the factory of the National Moroccan phosphates company (OCP/public) in Marca, near Laayoune, the capital of Moroccan-controlled Western Sahara. As a global leader in the market for phosphate and its derivatives, OCP has been a key player in the international market since its founding in 1920, the world's largest exporter of phosphate rock and phosphoric acid and one of the world's largest fertilizer producers.



Cas Animal in Crisis: *An update*



Bhardi of Palais Oriental (l) with Kiki and Donators (r)



from left to right: Jacqueline, Gilbert, Kiki and Sarita

-- Regular readers of THE MORNING NEWS have been following for more than two years the successes of the local foundation Cas Animal, which is dedicated to rescuing the stray, abandoned and abused dogs on Aruba. The efforts of its founder, and sole volunteer, Kirsten Arndt, had received sponsorship from TMN and been showcased regularly. We are proud to say this has resulted in donations and assistance from dog-loving tourists and islanders, as well as many adoptions of stray animals, who have found good and loving homes not only in Aruba, but the U.S. and Europe.

Nearly a month ago we began reporting on the sad news that Kirsten, known as "Kiki" to her friends, was laid low by a tumor pressing on her spine, just where her neck meets her skull. Because of the location, it affected her mobility from the neck down, paralyzing her legs and greatly reducing the use of her arms and hands, even interfering with her ability to breathe.

The story of Kiki, and her need for a specialized surgical procedure to fully remove the thankfully non-malignant tumor, became a saga complicated by an unfortunate series of events. Kiki, a German citizen who settled on Aruba 16 years ago with retiree status, lost her passport, permit and other important papers when her car was stolen by joyriders over 18 months ago. The perpetrators emptied them from her glove compartment and burned them. Though attempts were made to get new ones, these things normally progress at a very slow rate in the islands.

Most islanders are covered by the national medical insurance, AZV, but Kiki's father maintained a health policy for her out of Germany, for which she became ineligible in January, having lived out of the country for too long. AZV would not cover her without the proper papers proving her a legitimate resident of Aruba,

which is only reasonable. When trying to obtain the form from the Census office confirming her legal residency, they could find no record of her in their databases; she is not the only person to whom this has happened, but unfortunately for Kiki, this snafu could not have come at a worse time. This left her to pay all her medical expenses out-of-pocket. An initial surgical procedure and hospital stay, with MRI and medications and doctors fee, wiped out all her persona reserves, and she does not wish to touch the foundation funds which are targeted for constructing Aruba's first no-kill dog shelter. Ironically, just when this medical emergency hit, Kiki had finally received the permits to begin, and was readying to break ground.

The initial surgery revealed that the tumor pressing against Kiki's spine could only be removed by a most delicate operation with a "gamma knife," for which she had to travel to Bogota, Colombia. Since the medical insurance could not cover the costs, and Kiki needed to travel as soon as possible, the outlook was bleak.

However, this is a story of the triumph of the human spirit, and affirmation of the basic goodness of people, as well as a demonstration of appreciation for the work that Kiki does to save Aruba's mistreated dogs, and a confirmation by how many believe in her ultimate goal: a proper sanctuary for them.

A call went out in TMN and on the CAS ANIMAL Facebook page for assistance in Kiki's current situation. Elvis Weert, newscaster for TV Channel 22 Aruba, was always a strong supporter of the foundation's purpose, and made sure to feature an interview with Kiki recounting her desperate plight, on their featured news program. Within two days, the money needed for the operation in Bogota and plane tickets to and from Colombia, were donated by caring people, many who have been assisted by Kiki

in the past. Aside from saving dogs, she also maintains an Animal Ambulance for those who had no means to transport their dogs to the vet, or helped those who wished to leave Aruba with a street dog that had won their hearts.

Every day people became heroes, joining together to make every effort to see that Kiki would get the surgery she needed. Sarita Ramdas of Gemstones International dug deep into her own pockets, and organized all the other donations that came pouring in. She also burned up the phone lines back and forth between Bogota, making arrangements with the clinic where the operation would take place.

Bhardi, the owner of Palais Oriental store on Caya G.F. Betico Croes, was one of the first to give a donation, and then rallied other shop owners to donate. When the money was acquired, she gave her most trusted employee, Rosalba, who is originally from Bogota, a week's vacation to travel to Colombia with Kiki and stay with her through the procedure and act as translator.

Great thanks go to Landa Henriquez, the German Council for Aruba. Her constant efforts spurred the Governor's office to issue Kiki a temporary Dutch passport allowing her to travel, and she was constantly in touch with German officials so Kiki could take advantage of her presence in Colombia to obtain a new passport through the German Embassy in Bogota.

Steadfastly at her side through all this were Gilbert and his mother Jacqueline, who ran all the vital errands for Kiki to stay alive while waiting to go to Colombia, as well as feeding and caring for all the dogs the foundation had taken in. They are also dog lovers and maintain a sanctuary called Happy Tails, where they also board dogs and give obedience lessons. Gilbert and Jacqueline

took Kiki to the doctor, the hospital, got her prescriptions filled, and Jacqueline, a retired nurse, gave her the very necessary shots to control edema and swelling, which were steadily paralyzing Kiki more and more as the surgery was delayed. They were the ones who ran to all the government offices to pick up her papers or to get her plane tickets to Colombia.

Finally, the day arrived on Wednesday, May 15, for Kiki to depart, however, it was not to be. When arriving at the airport, the commercial airline refused to take her onboard without a specialized oxygen tank that only they could provide. This required a complex process to obtain, and would take at least an additional 48 hours to arrive on Aruba, after which new reservations could then be made to travel. The surgical procedure had already been scheduled for Friday, May 17, and Kiki would not make it with this final obstacle placed in her path.

The final hero of this tale is Alejandro Muyale, CEO of Tiara Air Aruba, who was contacted by Kiki's friends, who were absolutely desperate at this point. Alejandro rose to the occasion, arranging for Kiki and her companion to be transported to Colombia the very next day via the Tiara Air Aruba Air Ambulance. He completely sympathized with the situation, deferring payment until a later time, without question, as it was becoming a life and death situation. Each day Kiki woke to find she was losing more and more control over her body, the condition threatening to stop her breathing or her heart.

Kiki flew to Bogota on Thursday, May 16. Friday's operation lasted nearly 8 hours, and doctors describe it as "very delicate and exhausting," but they removed all of the tumor pressing on her spine. They are very optimistic. She is scheduled to leave the ICU today, and return to medium care, a good

sign.

Kiki's only thought before boarding the plane for Colombia was to see that all the dogs she has taken in and cared for would be protected. "I don't care if I die, or if I am left a paraplegic by this, as long as I see the shelter built and the dogs safe and in a proper place," she told her friends before departing; she had made arrangements to see this done.

Contreras Veterinary Clinic in Shaba works closing with Kiki in treating the dogs she rescues; they made a substantial donation to her traveling to Bogota. Anyone wishing to assist Cas Animal foundation in continuing its work by making a donation can help by paying on their account at the clinic, which still has a substantial balance due. Contact them at telephone number: 587-0987 to make a donation. Donations can be made directly to the foundation via their bank account at the CMB Bank account # 25762110. Donations can also be made to Happy Tales to help pay for the feeding and veterinary costs of the more than 30 dogs under Cas Animal protection; contact them by calling 587-4197 or 565-2130.

It is always heartbreaking to see a vital, dynamic person cut down by a serious physical ailment, particularly when that person continually strives for a worthy cause. All dog lovers know how canines are so often mistreated, or when abandoned, dismissed by the community. Kiki loved every single dog in her care with all her heart, particularly those the were "un-adoptable" and made physically ugly by the abuse heaped upon them. Those were the ones dearest to her heart. THE MORNING NEWS will keep her supporters posted on her progress and the outcome of the operation as soon as we get news from her doctors.

by Rosalie Klein

Excellent dining, charming ambiance and a breathtaking view found only at La Trattoria El Faro Blanco



Stunning sunset

Over twenty years ago, a very clever person had the idea of placing a cozy little restaurant on the top of the cliff adjacent to the California Lighthouse, offering the most stunning view of Aruba imaginable. La Trattoria el Faro Blanco took over the location some years ago, and the restaurant's quaint trappings, superb selection and amenable staff has made it a one of the island's most popular dining spots ever since.

Savoring the sight of a spectacular Aruban sunset and the tiered layout of the eatery also makes it the ideal spot for marking a special occasion, such as an anniversary or a marriage proposal, as well as a perfect venue for weddings or a celebratory party. An extensive and diverse menu and wine list allows those planning a special festivity will be able to devise a memorable event and management is ready and

willing to help you stay within your budget.

Many have taken note of this singular location as the place to go for that memorable romantic meal, and their reser-

vation staff reports a waiting list for the rail tables that offer the best unobstructed view, recommending reservations well in advance if this is important to you.



Risotto Frutti de Mare

The restaurant is now open from early in the day for refreshments, and is the perfect



lunch stop while touring, serving from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM, after which visitors can enjoy a light snack from their Pizza Mini Menu until 6:00 PM when they officially open

for dinner, until 11:00 PM. All these aspects of charming surroundings, dining al fresco with a breathtaking view (or in their enclosed air-conditioned dining room, if you prefer) and fine food makes La Trattoria El Faro the single dining experience that must not be missed before departing Aruba. **Reservations can be made by calling 586-0786 or 586-0787, or via e-mail link at their website, www.aruba-latrattoria.com, where you can peruse their latest menu, as Chef Alberto is always devising some tasty new specialty to take advantage of what is fresh for the season.**

Gold Coast Aruba: This is the time to invest

Management of Gold Coast Aruba, the island's newest and most innovative gated community, reports that sales have been very good and encouraging as the global economy recovers and people looking to purchase vacation homes have found that Gold Coast is an outstanding investment value. Director of Sales, Fito Croes has noticed a surprising percentage of owners in reality do not spend a great amount of time personally to use the villas or town homes they purchase, but are taking advantage of Gold Coast's rental services to turn their investment into ready income.

"The greater portion of home owners are using their 'home away from home' in Aruba to escape the winter months, or spend holidays with the family on the island," he remarked, "but I am gratified by how many are buying because they felt secure with real estate investment on Aruba. They really study the history and economy of the island and are impressed with the political stability and continually increasing value of prime locations. Gold Coast is in the heart of Malmok, considered Aruba's most exclusive community where the value of properties has only increased over time. It is only minutes to the best beaches



and all the action, and yet offers a quiet and secluded getaway; we are very pleased by the response to our concept."

Fito, with his sister Mayrin and brother Rudy operate Cas Bon, which has been constructing homes and building developments for all budgets for nearly twenty years. "Gold Coast Aruba is the jewel in our crown," observes Fito. "We were very excited about this project and the scope of actual and planned facilities and amenities. We have spoken to countless island visitors to find out what they would really want in a permanent residence on Aruba, and took from there."

Input from frequent vacationers who have dreamed of their own home in Aruba contributed to the realization of

Gold Coast Aruba which when complete will be a community of 260 town homes, villas and condominiums with a stunning clubhouse complemented by two additional community pool areas. The Clubhouse is about to start construction and will offer to the community homeowners and visitors 2 tennis courts, full service spa and fitness center as well as a stunning pool area and is expected to be complete by early 2013. It will also house a restaurant and mini-market.

Owners who purchased upon the groundbreaking only a few short years ago, are already enjoying a nearly 50% appreciation on their investment, particularly those taking advantage of the on site management's rental services program. There is always a great

demand for Aruba and facilities such as those at Gold Coast, make it easy for some owners to see a valuable return on their investment.

The design of the residences and public areas is open, airy and spacious, taking full advantage of the island environment, with quality construction and finishing available. Partnering with two of Aruba's top providers of kitchens and bathrooms enables developers to offer custom options allowing buyers to individualize their homes. An elegant and chic furniture package is available or island designers will assist owners in finishing the décor to their specific tastes.

There are many aspects to purchasing property; not the least is the future value of the

investment. To further enhance this, Gold Coast management have inaugurated a number of in-house services and have recently become affiliated Interval International, the world's largest network of vacation ownership properties which provides an unlimited international pool of investors to tap for ownership and rental prospects. Property exchange for a vacation in another destination is also available through the Interval International affiliation. Gold Coast's own rental services have also proven highly successful in assisting owners in renting their villas; 24-hour security and maintenance services also tip the scales when it is time to make a decision. Aside from all this, housekeeping, child care, catering services, car rental through its partnership with AVIS car rental are also available as well as pre-shopping services so cupboards and refrigerators are stocked upon arrival, which can also be arranged through their property management department. Personnel are also available to assist in arranging restaurant reservations and island activities.

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SPORTS

Cycling: Van Garderen captures Tour of California title

SANTA ROSA (AFP) - Tejay van Garderen, fifth in last year's Tour de France, captured the eighth Tour of California cycling race on Sunday, sealing his first career stage-race triumph in the final stage.

Slovakia's Peter Sagan won the eighth and final stage, which took the riders out of San Francisco via the iconic Golden Gate Bridge to a finish in Santa Rosa.

Van Garderen won the overall title in a total time of 29 hours and 43 minutes.

Australia's Michael Rogers was second overall, 1:47 back, with Colombia's Janier Acevedo third.

BMC rider Van Garderen, a 24-year-old American, continued a superb start to the year that has seen him finish fourth in the Paris-Nice and second at the Tour de San Luis ahead of his breakthrough victory.

The triumph came shortly after he became a father with the birth of his first child.

Sagan won his second stage win of the week after capturing the third leg, and notched the 10th Tour of California stage win of his career.

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Auto Racing: Four women among tentative Indy 500 starters

INDIANAPOLIS (AFP) - Britain's Katherine Legge and Pippa Mann and Brazilian Ana Beatriz joined the tentative Indianapolis 500 starting grid on Sunday to match a race record for women starters.

Together with Swiss racer Simona de Silvestro, who qualified Saturday, the four-some would equal the mark for women starters when the 33-car field competes in the 97th Indy 500 next Sunday over the famed 2 1/2-mile (4km) oval course.

The times must stand over Sunday's final hours of qualifying, but the top driver trying to bump his way into the lineup, Mexico's Michel Jourdain Jr, has been unable to approach in practice the speed needed to crack the field.

Legge has the slowest qualifying speed, the mark to beat, after a four-lap qualifying average Sunday of 223.176 mph. She only signed a deal Saturday to make a run at an Indy start for the second year in a row.

American Ed Carpenter won pole position on Saturday to lead 24 drivers in securing spots in the first eight rows on the starting grid.

The final nine spots over the three back rows were filled shortly after the speedway opened Sunday, led by American Josef Newgarden, who booked the inside of the ninth row with an average speed of 225.731 mph.

American Graham Rahal and Colombia's Sebastian Saavedra completed row nine with Frenchman Tristan Vautier on the inside of row 10

alongside Beatriz with Mann on the outside.

American Conor Daly and countryman Buddy Lazier, the 1996 Indy 500 winner, were on the last row with Legge clinging to the outside spot as the last hours of the time trials ticked away.

Chevrolet engines power 17 qualifiers, including the 10 fastest drivers, while 16 others have Honda power plants, the fastest of them Canadian Alex Tagliani who starts in the middle of the fourth row.

Defending champion Dario Franchitti of Scotland will start in the middle of row six, the exact center of the grid, but he won last year after starting on the inside of row six.

Tearful Beckham bids farewell to Paris before retirement



PARIS - (AFP) - David Beckham bade a tearful farewell to Paris on Saturday as the former England star made his final home appearance for Ligue 1 champions Paris Saint Germain before heading into retirement. Last week, Beckham, 38, had helped PSG to their first league title since 1994 with a win over Lyon, and then announced he would retire at the end of the season having captured a championship in a fourth different league after England, Spain and the United States.

Golf: McDowell edges Thongchai for World Match-Play title



KAVARNA (AFP) - Graeme McDowell again displayed the traits that has made him a feared Ryder Cup competitor in defeating Thongchai Jaidee 2 & 1 in the final of the Volvo World Match-Play Championship in Bularia on Sunday.

McDowell had been 2 down after just four holes to Thongchai but sensed near the turn his 43-year-old rival was starting to tire in the hot and cloudless conditions on the Thracian Cliffs course.

The Northern Irishman, who had beaten South African Branden Grace earlier in the day to reach the final, fought back to draw level with Thongchai at the 12th before going 2up in winning the 14th and 15th holes before sealing victory with a par at the 17th.

McDowell also becomes the first Irish-born winner of the tournament and 12 years after Padraig Harrington lost the 2001 final to Ian Woosnam.

Victory has moved McDowell up one place to number seven in the world and also eight places to the head of the Race to Dubai money list.

Thongchai secured the biggest prize cheque of his European Tour career of 400,000 euros.

The Thai golfer, who had defeated South African Thomas Aiken in the semi-final, has jumped 24 places to seventh on the Race to Dubai.

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Racing: Oxbow wins Preakness to spoil Orb's treble bid

BALTIMORE (AFP) - Oxbow won the 138th Preakness Stakes on Saturday as heavily favored Kentucky Derby winner Orb finished fourth -- his bid for US racing's coveted Triple Crown ruined.

"I get paid to spoil dreams," said Oxbow trainer D. Wayne Lukas, who claimed a sixth Preakness victory and his 14th win in the three US classics that make up the Triple Crown: the Kentucky Derby, Preakness and Belmont Stakes.

Veteran jockey Gary Stevens, riding again this season after a seven-year retirement, claimed a third Preakness win -- 12 years after his second.



Oxbow with jockey Gary Stevens

At 50, Stevens became the oldest jockey to win the Preakness.

Stevens took Oxbow, a 15-1 shot who finished sixth in the Kentucky Derby, to the front straight out of the gate in the \$1 million 1 3/16-mile race at Pimlico and held off runner-up Itsmyluckyday with Mylute third.

Itsmyluckyday went off as an 8-1 second choice and finished strong under John Velazquez but finished 3/4 of a length back.

Jockey Rosie Napravnik brought Mylute from ninth, and last, but finished half a length behind Itsmyluckyday.

Orb, again ridden by Joel

Rosario, went off the 3-5 favorite but didn't seem to like running in the traffic that he encountered from his starting position on the rail and saw a five-race winning streak end.

No horse has won the Preakness starting from the rail since Tabasco Cat in 1994.

Stevens said he thought Oxbow didn't get enough credit for his strong finish in the Kentucky Derby, but he knew he had plenty of horse.

Oxbow's victory means the Triple Crown drought will continue. The last horse to complete the treble was Affirmed in 1978. The 1 1/2-mile Belmont Stakes is on June 8.

NBA: Pacers hold off Knicks to reach Eastern finals

INDIANAPOLIS (AFP) - Lance Stephenson scored a career playoff-high 25 points on Saturday to lead the Indianapolis Pacers to a 106-99 victory over the New York Knicks and into the NBA Eastern Conference finals.

The Pacers withstood 39 points by Knicks star Carmelo Anthony to win the best-of-seven Eastern Conference second-round series four games to two and will now battle reigning NBA champions Miami for a place in the NBA finals.

The Pacers reached the Eastern Conference finals for the first time since falling in 2004 to Detroit. Last year they fell to the Heat in a bitterly fought six-game second round series.

The Heat, led by NBA Most Valuable Player LeBron James, finished off the injury-hit Chicago Bulls in five games, and will be well-rested when they host the Pacers in game one of the Eastern Conference finals on Wednesday.

New York native Stephenson said he was eager to prove

himself after what he considered a sub-par outing in game five, in which the Knicks fended off elimination at Madison Square Garden.

Paul George added 23 points for the Pacers. Roy Hibbert scored 21 points, grabbed 12 rebounds and blocked five shots.

New York's J.R. Smith, winner of the Sixth Man of the Year award as the league's top reserve, again struggled offensively. He scored 15 points and grabbed 10 rebounds, but connected on just 4-of-15 shots from the floor.

New York had erased a 10-point third-quarter deficit with four three-pointers in less than two minutes. Shumpert drained three straight threes before Smith concluded a 12-2 run with a three-pointer to knot the score at 72-72 with 3:10 left in the third.

It was 81-81 going into the fourth quarter, and Smith connected on another three-pointer to put New York up 92-90 before the Pacers launched their game-changing run.

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MLB Standings

American League

East	W	L	Pct	GB
YANKEES	27	16	.628	--
BOSTON	26	17	.605	1.0
BALTIMORE	23	20	.535	4.0
TAMPA	23	20	.535	4.0
TORONTO	17	26	.395	10.5

Central	W	L	Pct	GB
CLEVELAND	25	17	.595	--
DETROIT	23	18	.561	1.5
KANSAS	20	19	.513	3.5
CHICAGO	19	22	.463	5.5
MINNESOTA	18	21	.462	5.5

West	W	L	Pct	GB
TEXAS	28	15	.651	--
OAKLAND	22	22	.500	6.5
SEATTLE	20	24	.455	8.5
LA ANGELES	16	27	.372	12.0
HOUSTON	12	32	.273	16.5

National League

East	W	L	Pct	GB
ATLANTA	24	18	.571	--
WASHINGTON	23	20	.535	1.5
PHILADELPHIA	21	23	.477	4.0
NY METS	16	24	.400	7.0
MIAMI	12	32	.273	13.0

Central	W	L	Pct	GB
ST. LOUIS	28	15	.651	--
CINCINNATI	26	18	.591	2.5
PITTSBURGH	26	18	.591	2.5
CHICAGO	18	24	.429	9.5
MILWAUKEE	17	25	.405	10.5

West	W	L	Pct	GB
ARIZONA	25	19	.568	--
SAN FRANCISCO	24	19	.558	0.5
COLORADO	23	20	.535	1.5
SAN DIEGO	19	23	.452	5.0
DODGERS	17	24	.415	6.5

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Tennis: Nadal, Serena triumph in Rome



Spain's Rafael Nadal (L) and Switzerland's Roger Federer pose during the trophy ceremony of the ATP Rome Masters.

ROME (AFP) - Rafael Nadal and Serena Williams underlined their French Open ambitions with convincing final victories in Rome on Sunday.

In what was his 30th meeting with Roger Federer, clay court king Nadal outclassed the Swiss 6-1, 6-3 as he continued his stunning comeback following a seven-month injury absence.

Williams, who will head to Paris next week hoping to avenge her stunning first round defeat to Frenchwoman Virginie Razzano last year, was in equally imperious form as she swept aside Victoria Azarenka 6-1, 6-3.

Nadal's triumph means he now leads Federer 20-10 in their series, with 13 of his wins coming on clay.

He also now has 24 Masters titles in a career total of 56.

Ahead of his bid to extend his record run of seven victories in Paris, Nadal admitted he had never dreamed of such success -- he now has 36 wins in 38 matches since his return to the tour in February.

Federer, the second seed,

had overcome French upstart Benoit Paire in a late semi-final on Saturday to make his first final of the season.

But despite winning the opening game on serve on Sunday the Swiss failed to really get a grip on the match.

In all, Federer finished with 32 unforced errors to Nadal's eight.

Williams looked equally impressive on the red clay of centre court.

She broke Azarenka's serve three times in a one-sided first set and despite a tighter second set the American prevailed to stretch her career-best winning streak to 24 matches.

It was Williams's 51st career title and took her victory tally over Azarenka, who beat the American earlier this season in the final of the Doha hardcourt event, to 12-2 in their series.

It is Williams's second title at Rome, having first won the event in 2002.

And after conceding defeat to Razzano in last year's first round at Roland Garros, the American said she is taking a different approach this year.

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